

# Challenges Facing Christians Today

Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.

<sup>2</sup> While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

<sup>3</sup> So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

<sup>4</sup> The two of them, sent on their way by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia and sailed from there to Cyprus.

Acts 13:1-4 NIV



They traveled through the whole island until they came to Paphos. There they met a Jewish sorcerer and false prophet named Bar-Jesus,<sup>7</sup> who was an attendant of the proconsul, Sergius Paulus. The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the word of God.

<sup>8</sup> But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith.

9 Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said,

10 “You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord?”

11 Now the hand of the Lord is against you. You are going to be blind for a time, not even able to see the light of the sun.”

Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand.

12 When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.

Acts 13:6-12 NIV



<sup>15</sup> After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the leaders of the synagogue sent word to them, saying, “Brothers, if you have a word of exhortation for the people, please speak.”

<sup>16</sup> Standing up, Paul motioned with his hand and said: “Fellow Israelites and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me!

Acts 13:15-16 NIV





<sup>42</sup> As Paul and Barnabas were leaving the synagogue, the people invited them to speak further about these things on the next Sabbath.

<sup>43</sup> When the congregation was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked with them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

<sup>44</sup> On the next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.

<sup>45</sup> When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy. They began to contradict what Paul was saying and heaped abuse on him.

<sup>46</sup> Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: “We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles.

<sup>47</sup> For this is what the Lord has commanded us:

“I have made you a light for the Gentiles,  
that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.”

<sup>48</sup> When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed.

<sup>49</sup> The word of the Lord spread through the whole region.

<sup>50</sup> But the Jewish leaders incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the city. They stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region.

<sup>51</sup> So they shook the dust off their feet as a warning to them and went to Iconium.

<sup>52</sup> And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 13:42-52 NIV



8 In Lystra there sat a man who was lame. He had been that way from birth and had never walked.

9 He listened to Paul as he was speaking. Paul looked directly at him, saw that he had faith to be healed

10 and called out, "Stand up on your feet!" At that, the man jumped up and began to walk.

11 When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in human form!"

12 Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker.

13 The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them.

14 But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd, shouting:

15 “Friends, why are you doing this? We too are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them.

Acts 14:8-15 NIV



<sup>19</sup> Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. <sup>20</sup> But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe.

Acts 14:19-20 NIV





## Potential Foolishness amongst us

1. The Angry Fool
2. The Old Fool
3. The Holy Fool

## Mrs Stewart's Wisdom

- Know Who You Are
- Accept Who You Are
- Be Who You Are